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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 8187  
INFO RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN 0456

UNCLAS MUSCAT 000446

SIPDIS

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DEPT FOR NEA/ARP, OES/ENV, OES/PCI  
DEPT PASS EPA FOR TPRATHER  
AMMAN FOR ESTH JWHITTLESEY

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [AMGT](#) [AMPR](#) [KSCA](#) [OTRA](#) [SENV](#) [MU](#)  
SUBJECT: MUSCAT 2007 REQUEST FOR SCIENCE FELLOW

REF: STATE 30914

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Summary  
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¶1. To build on the past success of the Embassy Science Fellows Program in Muscat, Embassy requests a Science Fellow for FY 2008 in one of the following fields: medical sciences (with an emphasis on diabetes), marine sciences (biology/oceanography), hydrology/water resources, biotechnology/molecular biology, species conservation (oryx/sea turtles, in particular), materials science and agricultural diseases (lime/mango diseases). Embassy will provide Fellow with administrative support, including housing, an office, transportation for official meetings, and other logistical assistance. End Summary.

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From Diabetes to Species Conservation  
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¶2. Embassy requests a Science Fellow for Winter 2007/2008 to furnish expert advice to host country colleagues and officials, and to facilitate ties between the Omani ESTH community and U.S. counterparts. In particular, Embassy would appreciate a Fellow who specializes in diabetes research and awareness. Diabetes is a serious concern in the Sultanate. At the end of 2006, 50,000 diabetics were registered with the Ministry of Health, though it is estimated that up to 25% of Oman's population of 2.5 million is affected by type two diabetes mellitus. Of this figure, only about one-third are even aware that they have the disease, according to the Ministry of Health.

¶3. Embassy also would be able to accommodate a second candidate who would have expertise in at least one of the following disciplines: marine sciences (including biology and oceanography), biotechnology/molecular biology, geology, hydrology/water management, desert systems, fisheries science, desalination technologies, species conservation, or materials science. Omani environmental officials expressed a specific interest in investigating the impact of growing industrialization efforts in Sohar on the environment during a recent conference call to approve the work plan associated with the Memorandum of Understanding on Environmental Cooperation, a component of the U.S.-Oman Free Trade Agreement.

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Building on Success  
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¶4. Embassy hosted a second NSF-sponsored Science Fellow in

early 2004 with excellent results. Omani and expatriate interlocutors provided enthusiastic support and encouragement for the Fellow, who participated in bilateral workshops, interacted with a broad spectrum in the science community, and highlighted critical science topics such as fisheries and oceanography priorities, cetacean research, wildlife conservation efforts, biotechnology, and harmful algae bloom events. Omanis worked with the Science Fellow in exploring U.S. partnerships to address pressing regional problems related to the development of oceanographic research in the coastal waters of Oman, water resources, sustainable fisheries, species conservation, biotechnology capacity building, and the emerging field of materials science.

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Logistics: Housing, Resources, and Office Workspace  
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15. The Science Fellow would report to the Political/Economic Chief and work closely with the Public Affairs Officer and Economic/Commercial Officer, who serves as the Embassy's ESTH officer. Office space would be provided along with telephone, computer, and internet access. Embassy would provide housing, but personal transportation would have to be arranged by the Fellow. (Note: An economy car rents for approximately \$420 per month. End note.) Assistance in making appointments and other logistical arrangements would be provided, as well as interpreting and translating services on an as-needed basis. English is widely spoken in Oman, particularly in Muscat. While Fellows should have a security clearance at the secret level, this is not an insurmountable obstacle. Embassy will assist the Fellow to obtain a host country visa.

16. Embassy's preferred time frame for hosting a Fellow is December 2007/January 2008, for approximately two to three months. Point of contact is Economic/Commercial Officer Brian Grimm, email GrimmBM@state.gov; phone (968) 24-698-989, ext. 332; fax (968) 24-694-355.  
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